

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A golf bag carrier comprising:

a body comprising a longitudinal axis and defining a cavity adapted to contain a golf bag with a set of golf clubs therein; and

[[a]]an adjustable and flexible helmet attached to said body within said cavity, said helmet configured to extend over and engage the top of the heads of said golf clubs, in an orientation substantially perpendicular to shafts of said golf clubs, and adapted to constrain said golf clubs from moving in a direction along said longitudinal axis.

2. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 1, wherein said helmet comprises a head portion and a shaft portion, said head portion extending substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis and said shaft portion extending substantially parallel to said longitudinal axis.

3. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 1 further comprising a helmet locking assembly attached to said helmet wherein said helmet locking assembly is adjustable.

4. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 1, wherein said body further comprises at least one sleeve within said cavity.

5. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 4, further comprising a protective member received in said sleeve, the protective member having a first free end and a second free end, said first free end configured to extend circumferentially around said golf bag and said second free end configured to extend circumferentially around said golf bag.

6. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 5, wherein said second free end overlaps said first free end.

7. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 5, wherein said helmet further comprises at least one protective layer which contacts the golf clubs and said protective member further comprises at least one protective layer which contacts the golf clubs.

8. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 5, further comprising a protective member locking assembly which engages said protective member, wherein said protective member locking assembly is adjustable.

9. (original) A golf bag carrier comprising:

a body comprising a longitudinal axis and defining a cavity adapted to contain a golf bag with a set of golf clubs therein, said body comprising at least one sleeve within said cavity; and

a protective member received in said sleeve, the protective member having a first free end and a second free end, said first free end configured to extend circumferentially around the golf bag and said second free end configured to extend circumferentially around the golf bag.

10. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 9, wherein said second free end overlaps said first free end.

11. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 9, further comprising a protective member locking assembly which engages said protective member, wherein said protective member locking assembly is adjustable.

12. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 9, further comprising a helmet attached to said body within said cavity, said helmet configured to extend over the top of the heads of said golf clubs and adapted to constrain said golf clubs from moving in a direction along a longitudinal axis of said golf bag.

13. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 12, wherein said helmet further comprises at least one protective layer which contacts the golf clubs and said protective member further comprises at least one protective layer which contacts the golf clubs.

14. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 12 wherein said helmet comprises a head portion and a shaft portion, said head portion extending substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis and said shaft portion extending substantially parallel to said longitudinal axis.

15. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 12, further comprising a helmet locking assembly which engages said helmet, wherein said helmet locking assembly is adjustable.

16. (currently amended) A golf bag carrier comprising:

a body comprising a longitudinal axis and defining a cavity adapted to contain a golf bag with a set of golf clubs therein; and

a golf club protection assembly adapted to protect the golf club shafts and the golf club heads, said protection assembly comprising [[a]] an adjustable and flexible helmet configured to extend over the top of the golf club heads, in an orientation substantially perpendicular to shafts of said golf clubs, and adapted to constrain said golf clubs from moving in a direction along said longitudinal axis, and a protective member configured to extend circumferentially around the golf bag and the golf clubs.

17. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 16, wherein said protective member comprises a first free end and a second free, said first free end and said second free end configured to extend circumferentially around said golf bag wherein said second free end overlaps said first free end.

18. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 16, wherein said helmet further comprises at least one protective layer which contacts the golf clubs and said protective member further comprises at least one protective layer which contacts the golf clubs.

19. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 16, further comprising a protective member locking assembly which engages said protective member, wherein said protective member locking assembly is adjustable.

20. (original) A golf bag carrier in accordance with claim 16, further comprising a helmet locking assembly which engages said helmet, wherein said helmet locking assembly is adjustable.

21. (new) A golf bag carrier for transporting a golf bag and a plurality of golf clubs, each of the respective golf clubs having elongated shafts and golf club heads, the golf bag having a body and the shafts being situated in the golf bag with the golf club heads extending from the body, the golf bag carrier comprising:

an elongated body carrier body having a carrier cavity shaped to accept and generally surround the golf bag and the clubs; and

a golf club protection assembly coupled to the carrier and securing the golf club heads within the carrier cavity, the golf bag protection assembly comprising an adjustable protective helmet extendible over the heads of the golf clubs to engage and secure a top surface of the heads of the golf clubs and, and a protective member extendible about the golf club heads to engage and secure the side surfaces of the golf club heads, the helmet and the protective member collectively defining a protective enclosure for the golf club heads.

22. (new) The golf bag carrier of claim 21, wherein the carrier body is generally flexible.

23. (new) The golf bag carrier of claim 21, wherein at least one of the helmet and the protective member includes a locking assembly.

24. (new) The golf bag carrier of claim 21, wherein the protective member comprises a first free end, a second free end, and a length between the first free end and the second free end, the length of the protective member extendible around and generally conformable to a circumference of the golf bag.

25. (new) The golf bag carrier of claim 21, wherein the carrier body comprises a sleeve situated in the carrier cavity, the protective member passing through the sleeve.

26. (new) The golf bag carrier of claim 21, wherein the helmet includes a head portion and a shaft portion, the head and shaft portions foldable over the exposed golf club heads to secure the heads and portions of the shafts of the golf clubs proximate the heads, whereby the golf clubs are prevented from axial movement within the carrier cavity.

27. (new) The golf bag carrier of claim 21, further comprising a wheel casing and at least one wheel.

28. (new) A method of securing a golf bag and golf clubs within a golf bag carrier, the carrier including an elongated body carrier body having a carrier cavity shaped to accept and generally surround the golf bag and the clubs, and the golf bag carrier having a golf club protection assembly including a protective helmet having a head portion and a protective member having first and second free ends, the method comprising:

placing the golf bag with the golf clubs therein into the carrier cavity;

engaging the helmet to the tops of the heads of the clubs to prevent axial movement of the clubs within the carrier cavity during transport;

engaging the free ends of the protective member to position the protective member about the circumference of the golf bag to engage and protect the sides of the heads and the shafts of the clubs within the carrier cavity during transport; and

securing the helmet and the protective member to maintain the helmet and the protective member in engagement with the golf club heads and provide a protective enclosure surrounding the golf club heads on the top and sides of the clubs.

29. (new) The method of claim 28, wherein engaging the helmet comprises folding the helmet over the tops of the clubs.

30. (new) The method of claim 28, wherein engaging the free ends of the protective member comprises wrapping the protective member about the circumference of the bag until the first and second ends overlap.

31. (new) The method of claim 28, wherein securing the helmet and the protecting member comprises operating a locking assembly.

32. (new) The method of claim 28, further comprising adjusting the helmet to contact all of the heads of the clubs.

33. (new) The method of claim 28 further comprising adjusting the protective member to accommodate clubs of different sizes.

34. (new) The method of claim 28, the carrier having at least one sleeve within the cavity, the method further comprising passing the protective member through the sleeve to retain the protective member to the cavity with the free ends extending outwardly from the sleeve.

35. (new) A method of manufacturing a golf bag carrier, the method comprising
providing a carrier body defining a carrier cavity shaped to accept and generally surround a golf bag having golf clubs therein;

attaching a golf bag helmet to the body proximate an end of the carrier cavity, the helmet being foldable over heads of the golf clubs and preventing axial movement of the golf clubs within the carrier cavity; and

attaching a protective member to the body proximate the helmet, the protective member being extendible about a circumference of the golf bag and in combination with the helmet providing a protective enclosure about the top and sides of the golf club heads.

36. (new) The method of claim 35, the helmet having a first end, a second end and a length therebetween; and

wherein attaching the golf bag helmet comprises attaching the helmet to the carrier on the first end and leaving the second end free, whereby the second end is extendible over the tops of the golf club heads and the length is foldable to provide a portion of the protective enclosure for the heads.

37. (new) The method of claim 35, the protective member having a first end, a second end and a length therebetween, the method further comprising:

attaching a sleeve to the carrier body at a location interior to the cavity, and

passing the protective member through the sleeve, whereby a portion of the protective member length extend through the sleeve and each of the first and second ends are free to extend around a circumference of the bag.

38. (new) The method of claim 35, further comprising attaching a locking assembly to at least one of the helmet and the protective member.

39. (new) The method of claim 35, further comprising providing an adjustable locking assembly to at least one of the helmet and the protective member, thereby accommodating golf clubs of different sizes.